

DNREC Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Blotter: April 15-21

Reminder for the week: Retaining striped bass during spawning season unlawful in specified Delaware waters

DOVER – To achieve public compliance with laws and regulations through education and enforcement actions that help conserve Delaware's fish and wildlife resources and ensure safe boating and public safety, DNREC's Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers between April 15-21 made 2,569 contacts with hunters, anglers, boaters, and the general public, issuing 23 citations. Officers responded to 55 complaints regarding possible violations of laws and regulations or requests to assist the public. A Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police presence continued at the C&D Canal Conservation Area and Michael N. Castle Trail.

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Actions

Citations issued by category, with the number of charges in parentheses, included:

Wildlife Conservation: License forgery or misrepresentation (1), trespass to hunt (2), unlicensed hunting (1), and wild turkey violation – illegal take of beardless bird (1).

Fisheries Conservation: Unlicensed fishing (2), over-the-limit crab pots (1), possession of undersized white perch (1), possession of undersized largemouth bass (1), no Fisherman Information Network (FIN) number (4), and trespassing to fish (1).

Boating & Boating Safety: No life jacket on a child age 12 or younger as required by law (1) and operating a motor vessel with insufficient number of life jackets (2).

Public Safety: Possession of drug paraphernalia (2).

Other: Littering (1), damaging state property on a wildlife

area (1)*, and operating a motor vehicle off an established roadway on a state wildlife area (1)*.

**Includes citation(s) issued at the C&D Canal Conservation Area.*

DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife recognizes and thanks the majority of anglers, hunters, and boaters who comply with and support Delaware's fishing, hunting, and boating laws and regulations. Citizens are encouraged to report fish, wildlife, and boating violations to the Delaware Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police by calling 302-739-4580 or through the **DENRP Tip** app on a smartphone, which can be downloaded free of charge by searching "DENRP Tip" via the Google Play Store or the iTunes App Store. Wildlife violations may also be reported anonymously to Operation Game Theft by calling 800-292-3030, going online to <http://de.gov/ogt>, or using the DENRP Tip app. Verizon customers can connect to Operation Game Theft directly by dialing #OGT.

Are you AWARE?

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police remind anglers that during Delaware's striped bass spawning season, which began April 1 and continues through midnight on May 31, it is unlawful for any person to take and retain any striped bass from the Nanticoke River or its tributaries, the Delaware River and its tributaries to the north of a line extending due east beginning at and including the south jetty at the mouth of the C&D Canal, or the C&D Canal or its tributaries. Anglers are required to practice catch and release fishing during this season with no harvest allowed in these areas.

In addition, regulations require anglers fishing with natural bait on any striped bass spawning ground during the closed spawning season to use a non-offset circle hook. The Division of Fish & Wildlife recommends that circle hooks always be used when fishing natural baits because of their proven ability to reduce hook-and-release mortality for striped bass and other fish species. The circle hook's design usually results in fish

being hooked in the mouth, simplifying hook removal and reducing injury to the released fish.

For more information on fishing in Delaware, click on 2019 Delaware Fishing Guide. The guide also is available in printed form at DNREC's Dover licensing desk and from license agents throughout the state.

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